

Blind Spot

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Film Annotation #2

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517 Words

Title, director and release year?

Blind Spot is a 2008 environmental documentary directed by Adolfo Doring addressing the impending crisis of oil use.

What is the central argument or narrative of the film?

The central argument of the film is that civilization has unconsciously ordered itself around the use, or overuse, of fossil fuels. We are exploiting this resource at an unsustainable rate and because of the current organization of society and reliance on fossil fuels, when they are exhausted the consequences will be disastrous. The way in which we are set up for failure for life after oil is the implied "Blind Spot".

How is the argument or narrative made and sustained? (Use concrete examples from the film to illustrate.)

The argument is made and sustained primarily by the use of cutaway interview with experts offering specific issues for consideration, historical perspectives, and figures and data. The film also cleverly uses old black and white footage from the original ads for petroleum companies to create a sort of nostalgic feeling and contrast the excitement with the discovery of a new energy source with the somber outlook of the experts included in the film.

What sustainability issues did you spot? Identify and explain each. (Examples - Political, Legal, Economic, Technological, Media, Organizational, Educational, Behavioral, Cultural, Ecological)

The primary issues raised are ecological and economic. The exploitation of oil is harmful to the earth, and the rate at which we are using it spells disaster for humans, our economies as well as general existence. The film highlights technological issues as well since there is an outlook that somehow technology will solve the problems we are facing. Lastly, a new cultural and behavioral consciousness needs to develop so as to not view oil as limitless and change consumption habits.

What parts of the film did you find most persuasive and/or compelling?

I found two things in particular very compelling, the graphs and figures of peak oil and oil use, and the explanations of how economies and fossil fuels are currently inextricably linked.

Does the film have emotional appeal to you? Why? (Use concrete examples from the film to illustrate.)

The film has a definite emotional appeal to me, because it paints a very very grim picture of life "after peak oil". Some of the people featured in the film even go so far as to talk about the drastic reduction in population that will take place. Regardless, standards of living will change which carries an emotional component in and of itself.

Does the film rely more on science or emotion? (How does the film balance the scientific argument and the emotional argument?)

I think the film relies mostly on science with some emotional claims by the interviewees. Additionally, some of the scientific data is, by itself, emotional in nature because it could spell disaster for humans.

Does the film want you to do something? If the film does suggest action, do you think it is a good idea? Will the suggested action help?

Some of the interviewees make mention of "stopping population growth". I think that's kind of misguided, as population growth may be a symptom of a problem, not the problem itself. I think non-drastic measures can be implemented to help keep population growth's rate from increasing any more.

Are there other actions that are not suggested that should be taken?

I think swifter legislation could be implemented regarding efficiency of cars, and greater subsidies could be given to companies like Tesla with a track record of bringing more energy efficient products to market. I think the government should figure out a way to strategically punish the "old guard" of energy and stimulate companies interested in solving this problem.

What was the target audience for this film? Why?

I think the target audience for this film is general people who are fairly well educated. Many of the issues they address are related to other economic, political, or environmental issues that require some level of domain knowledge to accurately understand.